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GOV. SWANN'S SPEECH

AT THE

CONSERVATIVE

MASS MEETING,

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IN MONUMENT SQUARE,

Thursday, June 21, 1866.

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MY FELLOW-CITIZENS :

I have been invited to preside over this meeting, and I am here to-night in accordance with that invitation. I congratulate you upon this great outpouring of the conservative masses of the City of Baltimore. The appearance of this meeting is the more gratifying to me because it has been called specially to endorse the reconstruction policy of President Johnson, and the humble part which I have taken in giving it my unqualified approval. You were told that in taking this step I would be left without a "corporal's guard" in this State. Now, I should like to know what radical Major-General could muster a larger force than the "corporal" has drawn around him in this vast assemblage of his fellow-citizens. If this is the definition of a *corporal's guard*, I should like to know, my friends, what you understand by an *army*. I propose to speak to-night, not only for this vast assemblage here present, but for the people of the whole State, and I shall speak in such terms that those who agree, as well as those who differ with me in political sentiment, may have no ground for misunderstanding or misrepresentation hereafter.

Some time ago it became my duty, in order to prevent misunderstanding in the future, to publish in the "American" a denial of any authorized use of my name by certain persons in Washington County in fraternization with those who had been invited to repudiate the action of the Unconditional Union State Central Committee to divide and break up the Union party in this State. I also announced my purpose to sustain the reconstruction policy of President Johnson, as I had done in January last, and my repugnance to any co-operation with *extremists and radicals*.

In making this announcement I desired to be understood as occupying a conservative, *middle position*, between those who were endeavoring to drive us into *universal negro suffrage on the one side and the support of Disunionists on the other*.

It cannot have escaped the notice of Union men in Maryland, that for some time past the complications growing up in the Union ranks were assuming a most grave and serious aspect.

The result has been that an almost irreconcilable breach has taken place—a minority of *four* gentlemen of the Executive Committee of the Union State Central Committee having undertaken to engineer a party for themselves, and to form a new organization.

This *new* party, already in the field, have gone forth as propagandists of the most ultra doctrines, which, for six months past, have kept this country in a state of painful solicitude and suspense.

They have fraternized almost exclusively with negro suffrage radicals, and have endorsed the reconstruction report of the Committee of fifteen in the lead of Mr. Stevens, when Congress has ignored and thrown aside its substantial and leading features.

No party can preserve its organization without a recognized official head within the State to regulate its movements, and, when necessary, to call conventions of the people.

The Union State Central Committee has always been the organ of the party. There is no power but the people, within the period for which it is chosen, to supersede it, unless by resort to revolutionary measures. The point made by the founders of this *new party* assumed that the Chairman of the Committee was opposed to calling a meeting of the General Committee. However this may be, it seems that the General Committee *was* called, on a day even in advance of what these gentlemen desired. Upon what legitimate ground, then, do these seceders from the regular organization stand before the people? Their call of a convention was entitled to no more weight than that of any other four gentlemen, who, believing themselves strong enough to rule the State, take it into their heads to place themselves beyond the government of their party and invoke the people to aid them in a general break up. If we desire to maintain the organization of the party we must adhere to its government and its usages.

In opposing this irregular and disorganizing movement, I am denounced by the whole pack of extreme negro suffrage radicals, from one end of the State to the other. I have been subjected to the most barefaced misrepresentations and the grossest personal abuse, to which I should only degrade myself if I attempted to reply. For my support of Mr. Johnson's reconstruction policy—endorsed by the Legislature in January last—I am denounced as a traitor to the party that elected me, and my friends who do not come up to the full radical standard are summarily read out of the party, as either Copperheads or Disunionists. The gallant Colonel of the Seventh Maryland Regiment, who vacated his seat in Congress to give his services to his country, is a disunionist; the brave Gen'l Phelps, who at the head of his advancing column, fell wounded and bleeding upon the field of the Wilderness, under the flag which he was defending with his life's blood, is a disunionist; the intrepid Bowerman, who has done more for his country than this whole radical combination put together, is a disunionist; that war-worn veteran, General Horn, one of Maryland's bravest sons, is a dis-

unionist; the ex-Governor of your State, who stood at the helm during the most excited and trying period of the rebellion, and who never faltered in the discharge of any duty imposed by his responsible position, to whom we are indebted for our free Constitution, more perhaps than any other man, is a disunionist; I, who stood by that old patriot, Governor Hicks, on the 19th of April, aiding him by my counsels until he was overwhelmed by the power of Secessionists and traitors, while some of the most prominent of these radicals were resisting the passage of the Massachusetts troops through the City of Baltimore, running away from the city, or skulking in secret hiding places, I am a disunionist. The army and the navy, who support President Johnson almost to a man, are disunionists in the eyes of these brave and gallant radicals. General Grant and General Sherman are both disunionists, and the only truly loyal and reliable men to be trusted in this State are the leaders of this *new party*.

Now I would ask you, my friends, in the midst of the abuse which I have so innocently provoked, which is now being stimulated and kept alive by men belonging or professing to belong to the Union party, with whom I have heretofore co-operated, what do they find in my present position or past antecedents to place me in league with copperheads and disunionists? In discussing these issues I shall not follow the example of the Convention which met a few evenings since in the Front Street Theatre in this city. I shall indulge in no war of abuse. I have no unkind feelings towards these extreme radical men, not the slightest. I would rather win them over by an appeal to their reason and good sense than goad and irritate them by vulgar abuse. Many of them, I believe, are sincere and honest in their convictions of duty. I am quite content that the people shall deal with them, without prejudice from me. The unjust, unkind and ungenerous attack made upon me by the Hon. John L. Thomas—too weak in argument to be seriously controverted here—I shall notice no further than to express the deep regret it occasioned on his own account.

In referring to the pride with which, at the radical meeting at the Assembly Rooms with his newly acquired negro suffrage friends, he stood where the Hon. Henry Winter Davis had once addressed the people of Baltimore, his memory surely could not have been so treacherous as not to have reminded him of his life-long opposition to that distinguished gentleman, who, in his Chicago speech, placed himself and his friends squarely upon the platform of *universal negro suffrage*. Surely this could not have inspired the complacent satisfaction and swelling pride with which Mr. Thomas flourished upon the stand rendered sacred and memorable by the presence, in times past, of that great radical leader?

During the called session of the Legislature in January last, the resolutions endorsing President Johnson's reconstruction policy were passed by both branches of that body.

The vote stood as follows: In the Senate—in the affirmative—Messrs. Billingslea of Carroll, Billingsley of St. Mary's Clark, Earle, Eaton, Frazier, Jenkins, Lansdale, Mackall, McMaster, McNeal, Philpot, Stephenson, Trail, Turner, Vickers, Waters, Wells, Whitney—19. Negative—Messrs. Davis of Caroline, Davis of Washington, Holton, Ohr, Tome—5. In the House of Delegates—in the affirmative—Messrs. Frazier, Speaker; Barron, Brown, Calvert, Cairns, Chew, Comegys, Everhart, Fooks, Fawcett, Foster, Harris, Hazen, Hodson, Hoffman, Hopkins, Hynes, Jameson, Jones, Keeper, King, Lusby, Malone, Miller of Anne Arundel, Mules, Nairne, Norris, Parker, Poteet, Rider, Roberts, Robinson, Shory, Silver, Slothower, Smith of Allegany, Soper Stewart, Stone, Tolson, Tull, Usilton, Warner, Williams, Willis, Wilson, Wooden, Zeigler—48. In the negative—Angel, Bartlett, Buhrman, Cronise, Cummings, Darling, Dean, Eavey, Garrison, Hambleton, Kirk, Leaverton, Lee, Markey, McCullough, Miller of Washington, Pennington, Pilkington, Rinehart, Shaw, Smith of Frederick, Valliant, Wardwell—24.

We were not denounced as disunionists and traitors then.

These resolutions were based upon the views presented in my annual message. I certainly made no secret of my opinions at that time. On the contrary, my message was noticed as being so full and unmistakable, as to leave no doubt as to my political status. It may be proper to refer to one or two passages from that message.

“The work of restoring the States to their former status in such a crisis was one of the greatest delicacy and responsibility. Five millions of our deluded brethren, many of whom had been forced into hostility to the Union by crafty and designing demagogues, accepting the stern arbitrament of the sword, appealed for amnesty and pardon and expressed their readiness to renew their allegiance to the flag which they had so wantonly assailed. There were also those, few in number it may be, in every State who had never changed the relation of loyalty in which they stood to the Government, whose claim to protection under their respective State organizations was as perfect as that of any other section. President Lincoln leaned to the side of mercy and forgiveness, and announced his policy of reconstruction at an early period, even before the war terminated. He accepted his obligation under the Constitution, to bring the States whose functions had been suspended by the war, once more in harmony without doing violence to existing guarantees or the unity of the Government. The war in which we had been engaged was not a *foreign* war against a separate nationality, but a war to put down insurrection among our own people. The power of the Government to do this had been fully vindicated. To argue the non-existence of States as the result of this effort, would be to admit the weakness of the Government to maintain its own integrity against internal strife and domestic insurrection.” Again:

“President Johnson following in the footsteps of his predecessor, adopted the same plan of reconstruction. He threw himself upon the loyal element of the rebellious States—upon the white population who alone possessed the right of suffrage under existing laws—extending amnesty in the begin-

ning to those only who had faltered in their loyalty, whose status was such as to give reasonable assurance of fidelity in the future.

“Believing as I do, that the withdrawal at any period after the rebellion commenced, of the prominent and leading men connected with it—principally those who held the reins of power, on whom its responsibilities mainly rested—would have restored peace to the sections, I cannot but accept the policy of both Presidents as dictated by the soundest appreciation of the unmistakable drift of public sentiment and the highest obligations of Constitutional duty and practical statesmanship. To have refused words of kindness and encouragement to so large a class of our population who are in the future to constitute no inconsiderable part of our restored Union, and who had announced their willingness to renew their pledges of citizenship and loyalty, would have been a rebuke damaging to our hopes of successful reconstruction.

In another part of that message I take occasion to say “the policy of continuing the government of the Southern States in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon race began to assume shape and prominence in the threats held out by some, that no State should resume her former status in the Union without a transfer of the political power which she had always exercised, to the control of the negro race. This was the practical effect of universal negro suffrage, as claimed by some of those who are now arrayed against the President’s plan of reconstruction.”

In conclusion, I say in reference to the reconstruction policy of Messrs. Lincoln and Johnson, “I shall hold myself prepared, with the sanction of the people of Maryland, to co-operate in the plans which he has so wisely inaugurated to restore, by all proper encouragement, and at a suitable time, the relations of the past and to re-unite our people once more in the bonds of a common brotherhood.”

It may create surprise with many, looking at the turn which things have since taken in this State, when I refer to

the fact that these utterances received the sanction of the Union party in the popular branch of the Legislature, as will appear by the following vote:

In the affirmative, on the resolution endorsing the Message—Messrs. Frazier, Speaker; Angel, Barron, Brown, Clift, Cook, Cronise, Cummings, Darling, Dean, Earey, Everhart, Foster, Garrison, Hazen, Hoffman, Hynes, Jones, Keefer, King, Kirk, Leaverton, Lee of Baltimore city, Lusby, Mackey, McCauley, McCullough, Miller of Washington, Mittag, Norris, Parker, Pennington, Rhinehart, Sherry, Slothower, Smith of Allegany, Smith of Frederick, Soper, Tull, Valliant, Wardwell, Willis, Zeigler—43.

Now let me ask my friends, who has changed? Have I gone back upon a single position taken by me in that message?

When this war terminated, I felt anxious with all conservative men to see this country re-established upon a permanent and enduring basis. The rebels had laid down their arms and applied for pardon. I had no bitter animosities to cherish and keep alive. To hold so many States and so large a class of our population by military power, was not only impracticable in itself unless at a ruinous cost to the people, but directly opposed to the spirit of our institutions. Besides, I could see no good reason why the *people* of the States should not be again re-united. There were no latent causes of danger likely to spring up in the future. They were subdued and prostrate, seeking pardon at the hands of a powerful and magnanimous Government.

It was not our policy to degrade them. They had been our brethren in the past, descended from the same common stock with ourselves; and if this Union was intended to be kept together, were to become a most important part of our aggregate population. I speak of the *masses*—not the leaders of this rebellion. The leaders are now the only remaining cause of irritation, because the people have been betrayed and ruined by them; and the sympathy which we feel for the masses does not apply with the same force to those who were the authors of the troubles which have been

entailed upon us. But the rebellion once subdued, the States were remanded back to all their former Constitutional rights as States and integrals of our common system. We had no right to say, you shall not be represented in Congress *by true and loyal men*. The Constitutional Union would no longer have existed had the extreme radicals in Congress succeeded in holding the States as conquered provinces, and not as States in the Union. This Union cannot be divided, and when President Johnson by his proclamation announced the rebellion as at an end, the Government resumed her former relations—each State standing as before the rebellion commenced. This policy was not Mr. Johnson's policy alone. It was inaugurated by Mr. Lincoln in the case of Louisiana and Tennessee and Arkansas, and was steadily adhered to by him until the period of his death. It was known and approved by the Convention that nominated him for the Presidency, and Andrew Johnson for the Vice Presidency. Now we are told that Mr. Johnson has deserted his party and the platform on which he was elected. And what does this policy mean? It means simply that now the war is over the States shall have their representation in Congress restored to them—not by the recognition of the claims of defiant military leaders, or insolent members of rebel Legislatures who were mainly implicated in stirring up this strife, but *by true and loyal men—men who are qualified, and mean in good faith to stand by this Government*. That is the whole theory in a nut-shell. And who supports this doctrine of Presidents Lincoln and Johnson, now that the rebellion has been so triumphantly put down? It is supported by some of the ablest and most distinguished men in the National Union Party. It is supported by the great masses of the people, as I think will be found in the Fall elections. It is supported by Mr. Seward, the ablest statesman in Mr. Johnson's Cabinet, and his no less distinguished colleagues in that body. It is supported by Grant and Sherman, through whose bravery the rebellion was brought to a close. It is supported by the almost united voice of the army and navy. And yet with all this evidence staring us in the face,

I am denounced and hunted like a traitor, by these extreme radicals, because I have dared to support Mr. Johnson's reconstruction policy, against the revolutionary combinations which have been formed, to weaken the powers of the Administration and postpone indefinitely the work of reconstruction.

Upon the subject of our unhappy differences, I do not know that I can say any thing, which would not suggest itself to prudent and thinking men throughout the State. I regret to witness the spectacle of a great Party, such as that which has conducted us through the rebellion, tamely submitting in so many and cardinal measures of public policy, to the dictation of intemperate and ill-judging men. The national men of the party should the rather oppose and hold in check the ultrasisms which are now threatening our destruction. Deeply should I regret, that any thing should occur, to separate me from fellowship with the National men of the Union Party, with whom I have cordially co-operated for the past four years, in saving this Union. I can see nothing which should provoke any one, either in Congress or out, to make war upon President Johnson. His platform is the same that it has always been. He was elected to the office of Vice President of the United States on the same ticket with Abraham Lincoln by a Convention of the Union Party. He had opposed the rebellion as no other man had opposed it. He had suffered in his person and his property, and had made sacrifices in the maintenance of his principles which gained him the admiration of loyal men of all parties and every shade of opinion. His uncompromising devotion to his country gave him the nomination of that Convention, and resulted in his elevation to the high office which he now fills. In his reconstruction policy, he did no more than follow in the footsteps of Mr. Lincoln. The leading ground of complaint against him, so far as I have been able to understand it, was his inability, under the obligations of his official oath, to sanction certain ultra radical measures whose effect would have been to have ignored the existence of the States—placed the negro on a

forced basis with the white man—and inaugurated the universal right of suffrage, which would have precipitated the whole Southern and Border States—our own among the number—into the hands of the African race. Will Maryland find fault with him for this?

The persistent effort which is now being made to misrepresent me, is simply disgraceful and unworthy of any party having pretension to truth and honesty.

I have stated that the issue of negro suffrage in the coming Fall campaign was well made and a most vital issue, as I believe, in the State of Maryland at the present time.

I have seen no reason to change my opinion upon this point. I entertain the belief that *forced* negro suffrage and negro equality will destroy the State of Maryland if it does not bring ruin upon the negro race. I have always dreaded a war of races; and I believe that if this ultra radical faction is not promptly checked by the popular voice, it cannot fail to precipitate such a result. Consider for a moment the propositions submitted to the House by Mr. Stevens, and by Mr. Sumner to the Senate. When this issue of negro suffrage was made here, these radical men raised their hands in horror. They told you that no one advocated negro suffrage or negro equality. What, let me ask, have the extreme men of this Congress been doing for the past six months? Did they not by an overwhelming majority in the popular branch, attempt to fasten universal, unqualified, negro suffrage upon the District of Columbia, in the face of the unanimous protest of the people? Why is that bill now permitted to sleep? Is it not because the firmness and known sentiments of Andrew Johnson, arrested it before its final consummation? The attempt to enlarge the Freedman's Bureau Bill was a step in the same direction. The freedmen were already better cared for than our own race, under the law as it stood. It was still a subsisting law. I was among the first to denounce this new bill, when brought to the notice of our people by the attempt of Mr. Senator Creswell to include the State of Maryland, a loyal State with a loyal Governor, in the operation of this law. It was one of the series of mea-

asures in which certain extreme men in Congress had been engaged, to degrade the industrial and working classes of the border States, by forcing them in direct competition, and upon terms of equality, with the negro race. I am the friend of the negro and I want to see him protected against such partial and unwise legislation. I should have considered myself insulted, and my State outraged by the interposition of a military force in the hands of the Freedman's Bureau, or any other Bureau, to teach me my duty in giving protection to every citizen without regard to race or color to supercede the authority, which the people had placed in my hands. We have had enough of military interference in the State of Maryland. I have myself been the victim of its power and unjust discriminations. Besides, the very men who have been employed to protect the negro under the old law, are now in some instances, enslaving and robbing him of his earnings, in order to enrich themselves. I advocated universal emancipation, because I believed it to be right in the view of God and man. I have been a practical emancipationist all my life, and have liberated more slaves, I verily believe, before the rebellion broke out, than the whole radical party in the City of Baltimore put together. In doing this, I had no political object to subserve. I am now prepared to do whatever may be required to protect the negro in the full control of his person and his property, and to uphold him in the enjoyment of his newly acquired freedom.

I will defy any one to show, that there is now, or ever has been, since the Proclamation of Emancipation, any *systematic or combined purpose* in the State of Maryland, to interfere with his freedom, which the civil authorities could not control. The New Constitution made him free long before many of the States had acted. At no time, however, have I ever advocated an amalgamation of the two races, or believed that it would be practicable to invest the negro with the power to hold office, or to share with the white race the governmental control of the country.

I do not know upon what principle of justice or humanity we are called upon to share this Government, in the political

rights which we enjoy under it, with the negro race. It is a race wholly and entirely distinct in many of its characteristics from our own. They can establish a government for themselves, if they desire it, just as we have created this. The injustice of bringing them here has been wiped out by restoring them to their freedom, and protecting them as all other citizens are protected. But here we must pause, if we could regard the comfort and safety of these unfortunate people. Human prejudices are hard to be overcome, and a war of races is not one of those impossible events which in the present aspect of things, we may turn away from without alarm. I hope I may be mistaken in this view.

Another of these measures in the interest of negro suffrage and forced negro equality, was the Civil Rights Bill, vetoed by President Johnson, and passed by the Constitutional majority in both Houses of Congress. It is not my purpose at this time to refer to the extraordinary provisions of that Bill.—I am not opposed to the amplest protection to the negro.—The people understand what that Bill means—and every day will make it more and more apparent. Speaking of the subject of citizenship, Judge Curtis, in one of the ablest opinions ever delivered in the Supreme Court declares, “that the Constitution has left the States to determine what persons born within their respective limits acquire by birth citizenship of the United States.” He further declares that Congress has no such power, it belonging exclusively to the States. This effort, by Congress, to confer by law the right of Federal citizenship upon the negro race, is fraught, in my opinion, if recognized, with the most momentous consequences. It may settle forever the question of negro suffrage and negro equality—State Laws and State Constitutions to the contrary, notwithstanding. Its effect may be of doing by indirection, what it would be hopeless to attempt just now by open, avowed and expressed legislation. If the negro is declared by the proposed amendment to the Constitution to be a citizen of the United States, with all the “privileges and immunities” of such citizens, and Congress has the power to enforce this provision by “appropriate legislation,” what is to

prevent these extreme men, the moment they get the power, from declaring these "privileges and immunities," to extend to the privilege of voting—the right to serve on juries and the right to hold office? What will the word "*white*," embodied in our State Constitution, avail to protect us against negro suffrage, and the right of the negro to do what ever the white man may do?

But the report of the Committee of Fifteen is even more pointed and significant. It presents to the State of Maryland a choice between negro suffrage on one hand, and the loss of a valuable portion of her representation on the other. These ultra radical men, not satisfied with the great moral revolution which has been accomplished by the Proclamation of Emancipation, persist in their effort to *force* the negro into political and social relations with the white man. It can never be done, in my opinion, without the most serious consequences. The effect of the enlarged Freedman's Bureau Bill, would have been to have subjugated the whole Border States, in the interest of an intolerable fanaticism. The State of Maryland, just emerged from the abuses and outrages of an irresponsible military despotism, was to be again thrown back in its march of pacification and reconstruction—the writ of Habeas Corpus, that great safeguard of the liberties of the people in time of peace, was to be again suspended, without the remotest pretext of necessity—your elections were to be controlled and directed by military influence, and the people were to be brought to realize the threat, that sooner or later we would be compelled to touch our hats to the negro.

And what did this Bill design to do for the gallant men of our own race who have fought your battles and saved your country. It makes no similar provision for them. It lavishes millions upon the negro. Our soldiers have asked for bounties which they have fairly earned. Are they not as much entitled to aid as the freedmen? Have they made fewer sacrifices? Have they fought less bravely? The widow and the orphan—what did it propose for them? Twenty, nay, forty millions of money were to be lavished upon the negro. Do these extreme men suppose that the people of this country will rest quiet much longer under

such gross and flagrant injustice and insult? And yet they appeal to the soldiers to sustain them by their votes. This theory of negro suffrage may do very well for the States where there are comparatively no negroes to be dealt with. But how does it affect us here in Maryland? We have now nearly 200,000 negroes within our borders. Immigration is flowing in upon us in a steady current. Proclaim negro suffrage—take from the States, as proposed in the rejected Civil Rights Bill, the power to manage their domestic concerns—and in a very few years you will have a preponderance of the negro race. Maryland is their *Paradise* now: it would be much more tempting with these increased and superadded inducements. This is no forced theory. Can it be supposed that you or any other Marylanders can look without concern upon the consummation of such a line of policy?—your Constitution subverted—your State deprived of her legitimate powers—your people degraded—and the negro virtually placed over your heads?

It is the custom with the leaders of this radical faction, to denounce all men as traitors and disunionists who do not agree with them upon every issue, however repugnant, which they are trying to force upon this country. They charge me with a purpose to precipitate the State at once, and by an arbitrary assumption of power, into the hands of those who have taken arms against us, and have made themselves offensive in this rebellion.

I denounce it as untrue in every particular. They know that I am and have always been opposed to any such effort. In regard to the Registry Law, about which so much has been said, I am now where I stood in my annual message to the Legislature in January last. As the Executive of the State, I shall do my duty in executing that as well as all other laws upon your statute book: but I shall take care, so far as my influence extends, that the Registration Act is not made the instrument of degradation to our people, in the hands of vindictive and radical agents, to force negro suffrage and negro equality upon us. I shall see that it is fairly, impartially, and justly, administered, by the appointment of men of undoubted Union antecedents and unquestioned loyalty, in the spirit in which it was enacted by

the Legislature, and not of intolerance and oppression, of which, I regret to say, there has been too much in the past.

This cry of disunion—of fraternizing with traitors—is the system of jugglery by which they hope to inflame the public mind and withdraw attention from their own short-comings. If you cannot sanction the Bill imposing universal negro suffrage upon the helpless people of the District of Columbia, against their consent, (ignored by Congress,)—if you cannot approve the enlarged Freedman's Bureau Bill, entailing \$20,000,000 of expense upon the country—placing an irresponsible military despotism over your people, without the pretext of necessity, (which failed to be sustained,)—if you cannot approve the sentiments of their great champion, Senator Wilson, in his speech upon negro suffrage and negro equality, at the meeting of his colored friends a few evenings since in this city—if you cannot concur in all the features of the Civil Rights Bill or the reconstruction measures of the Committee of Fifteen, (already repudiated by Congress,) you are denounced as traitors and disunionists, and set upon by the whole pack of disorganizing fanatics from one end of the country to the other. This system of vulgar abuse has no terrors for me. The Union men of the State of Maryland know my antecedents, and I may well afford to await the calm judgment of the people in the face of all their denunciations. They talk of treachery to the party and my *obligations* to the radical men of this State for the position which I now occupy. I owe no obligations to any such faction. The conservative men to whom I owe my election are still my friends. The masses of the people have not deserted me. These radical men were signally rebuked and overwhelmed in the gubernatorial canvass, and they gave me a reluctant vote only when they could no longer have their own way. In the excess of their bitterness, they threaten now that they will give their countenance to any one else, even a Democrat, for whom they profess a holy horror. This is by no means a matter of surprise to me, when I know that their champion in the last House of Delegates, approached the recognized leader of the Democratic party and proposed a coalition with him, to defeat the resolutions endorsing President Johnson, after

having failed with another gentleman of the same party. These gentlemen are not deceiving me by dealing in such threats.

Whether these extreme negro suffrage and negro equality radicals are to rule me and my friends out of the Union Party, because of our utter disgust of their manœuvres to win the State over to their interests, will be for the people to determine. I ask no favors at their hands—I have no dread of their power, and I wish them to understand this most distinctly. The attempt to create false issues—to raise the cry of fraternization with Copperheads, Democrats, Disunionists, because I dare to support the policy of President Johnson and his cabinet, is simply contemptible, come from what source it may. The credulous who are unaccustomed to these tricks may be blinded in the beginning, but their eyes will be thoroughly opened before this canvass ends. Senator Wilson in his speech a few evenings since, which I could wish for his own sake had been a little more temperate, has sufficiently explained the platform on which he stands. Do these men here repudiate him? Will they dare to come out boldly and denounce the doctrines which he has endeavored to inculcate? Will they tell the people of Maryland that the party who voted for negro suffrage in the District of Columbia are not ready, whenever they have the power, to do the same thing over again. They insist that negro suffrage is no issue in this State. Is it not high time that it should be made an issue, and that those who are in accord with this negro suffrage and forced negro equality party should be made to stand up and be tried upon it.

The reconstruction and universal suffrage agitators held a meeting in Faneuil Hall a few days ago, in which some of the gentlemen who have been canvassing our State with Messrs. Thomas, Creswell and others, participated. This meeting was presided over by the present Governor of Massachusetts. The following were among the resolutions adopted:

“*Resolved*, that the sectional alienations and animosities which have so long disturbed the republic, ending in civil

war, had their origin in the denial of *equal civil and political rights* to all men before the law, and that speedy and lasting prosperity and peace can only be secured *by guaranteeing to every citizen, without regard to color or race, equal civil and political rights.*" Mr. Stokes stated that in less time than twelve months, the negro would have the privilege of voting in Tennessee. Mr. Boutwell said: "He believed that there never could be any reconstruction until the rights of the negro were granted to him, which were the *elective franchise and eligibility to office.*"

But, fellow citizens, my great dependence after all, in averting the danger which now hangs over us, is the practical good sense and sound judgment of the freedman himself. Excited as he is and must be by demagogues and fanatics, he is hardly permitted to follow his own counsels. You talk to him about his right of suffrage, in his present ignorant condition. What does he know or care about the use of the ballot? Some time ago a distinguished leader of this radical negro suffrage party said in the Maryland Institute, that the most beautiful spectacle he had ever witnessed was a negro girl at the head of her class in one of the Normal Schools of Massachusetts, leading a number of young ladies of our own race, and appropriating the honors of the institution. This may be refreshing to this gentleman's eye, but it would not strike all with the same enthusiasm here. The humblest mechanic and working man would turn away from it in disgust.

It is their purpose to attempt to bring about the same state of things in our public schools in Maryland? Senator Wilson, in his speech at the Douglass Institute, as reported in the daily papers said, that for his wife and his child he desired perfect equality with the negro. Are we prepared now to place our wives and our children in any such forced relations? With what propriety do these people come here to the State of Maryland, to stir up strife between these races, who are now living in perfect harmony together. They can do what they please in their own State—we have never interfered with or questioned the right of a State to manage

its own domestic concerns—give the negro the right of suffrage, introduce him into their families, if they please, but they have no right to dictate to us what we shall do here. A short time since a negro lawyer came to Baltimore from Massachusetts, sent no doubt by some of these agitators, to test the value of the Civil Rights Bill. He attempted to thrust his colored friends into rail road cars, where our own people are not permitted to go, sued out writs of injunction to prevent the running of the city passenger railway, appeared in our courts and had a good time generally in his defiant career. The effect of this rash adventure may be inferred from the following card, from Mr. Isaac Myers, chairman:

A CARD.—At a meeting of the colored citizens of Baltimore, held Wednesday, May 23d, 1866, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Whereas, There is now in this city a person calling himself —— Bradly, represented to be a lawyer of some note, from Massachusetts, whose only object is to excite and agitate the public mind upon questions belonging exclusively to the colored citizens of Maryland; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we denounce the action of the aforesaid Bradly, and demand that he let the colored citizens of Baltimore attend to their own business, in their own time, and in their own way.

ISAAC MYERS, *Chairman*.

I regret that a similar hint had not been administered to Senator Wilson, whose inflammatory teachings, and gratuitous attack upon President Johnson and the Executive of this State, placed his colored friends in the position of complimenting him by a handsome testimonial for assaulting in violent and abusive epithets, those from whom they were daily receiving evidences of kindness and protection.

Fellow citizens, these negro suffrage and *forced* negro equality men must not shut their eyes upon the damaging effect of their dangerous and inopportune teachings. While all good men in the State of Maryland are doing their utter-

most to harmonize the races by moderate counsels and kind treatment, they are met by adverse influences over which they have no control, and which, sooner or later, may involve responsibilities which may well cause them to hesitate. The freedmen here in Maryland, under the full protection of our laws and the kind sympathies of our people, I believe, would prefer to stop this agitation, for the present at least. But these demagogues and fanatics must reap their harvest, even at the cost of the embittered feeling which they are provoking between the races. I warn them now of the responsibility which rests upon them. If they are the friends of the freedmen, which they profess to be, they will leave suffrage and equality to work their own way, without *coercive legislation*. I deprecate these efforts to stimulate premature agitation which is already leading to results which every true friend of the freedman must look upon with regret. The position of the State of Maryland, I repeat again, is very different from that of the States north of us, where they have comparatively no negroes and are not likely from natural causes to have any. They tell us the white man greatly underrates himself if he admits the power of the negro to get the upper-hand. But how are we to help ourselves with the influx of negro immigration steadily pouring in upon us? If the negro gets the numerical power, a result certain to take place, with the temptation of social and political equality, forced upon us by Congress, where are the people of Maryland? The wealthy and independent may flee to other States, but what is to become of the mechanic and workman, whose all is invested here? Are they prepared to adopt the terms socially and politically, which Mr. Wilson has announced himself so anxious to bring about?

The interest of all parties and all classes in this country is involved in the speedy reconstruction of a cordial Union between all the States. The war is over and we have nothing to fear from such a policy; on the contrary, we have every thing to lose by keeping alive a spirit of sectional alienation. Your country is now suffering—your own city is suffering commercially, from the doubt and uncertainty which hangs

over the future. The business relations of the country will not be resumed until the States are brought back and clothed with their constitutional functions. We have other matters to look after more important than these struggles for party-power and party ascendancy. We have foreign enemies to deal with, demanding the united strength of our whole people, North and South. There is Maximilian, we are not free from that complication. If he is tardy it may be necessary for this Government to help him to get out of Mexico. There is Spain, it is high time that she should be taught that she lives in a Christian age, and will not be permitted to violate the laws of common humanity, against American citizens domiciled in a foreign land, or any where on this Continent. There are outstanding accounts with England and France, which the present unsettled condition of European affairs may swell into proportions. It is the more necessary, therefore, that our people should be united, and that we should keep ourselves in position for any emergency which may be likely to occur.

Congress has thought proper to carry the Civil Rights Bill over the veto of the President. He has discharged his duty as he understood it, by interposing his veto, and it was the right of Congress to do just what Congress did. The responsibility is now with Congress. The President will execute this law, I doubt not, in good faith, and leave the people to deal with it through the ballot-box. The President has done no more than he had a right to do, as a co-ordinate branch of the Government. They cannot find in this any good reason to drive him from the ranks of the Union party, with which he has heretofore co-operated, nor can they prove that he has ignored any cardinal principle upon which he came into power. If he has been guilty of too much leniency and forbearance towards the authors of this rebellion, it may be placed to the account of his overweening desire to allay the irritations of the past, and to see these States again reunited.

I shall stand by the people of my State. I shall do all in my power to save them from insult and degradation. I shall co-operate with conservative men, in averting the ruin which

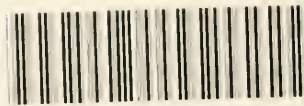
is now impending over us. I believe that before the adjournment of the next Congress, unless the conservative elements of this country shall become aroused to the dangers of the situation, in spite of the protestations of this radical faction, we shall have *universal, unconditional negro suffrage and forced negro equality*, the law of the land, and Maryland will enter her protest, as she will surely do sooner or later, when the power will have passed into other hands and she finds herself the victim of her own unsuspecting credulity.

In conclusion, fellow-citizens, let me warn you of the dangers of your present situation. I have served you faithfully for the last twenty years in many positions in which you have placed me. I can have no motive to mislead you now. You have vast interests at stake. Stand firm to your principles as Unconditional Union men. Be not intimidated by the threats of demagogues and fanatics. The men who are trying to lull you into security upon the negro question, are not the true friends of the State of Maryland, or the great national interests of the country. They have already shaken the public confidence in the great party which carried us through this war. If we would make that party strong, *we must either hold these extreme radical men in check or come out from among them altogether*. Negro suffrage is not dead. It only awaits the election by the people, in the coming autumn, of a radical Congress. I shall consider it my duty as an Unconditional Union man, committed to the doctrine *that none but loyal men shall rule over us*, to guard against rash and inconsiderate counsels. I shall recognize no new party in the interest of extreme radicalism. I belong to the party of the Union. The effort by a handful of men to break up the Union party in this State can never succeed. The Convention which met here a few days ago, representing a mere fraction of our population, ought to convince you of this. Congress has already shown unmistakable signs of restlessness under the teachings of Messrs. Sumner and Stevens. They have already drawn themselves in closer affiliation with the President. Let the Conservative



Union men of Maryland frown upon this attempt to disorganize and break up the party. The representatives of the Unconditional Union men of this State, who are called to assemble in this City on the 25th July, will present a fitting opportunity to rebuke, as they must do, the extreme radicalism which is now threatening our destruction, by enlarged and national views of our present complications, and to place the Union Party upon ground more permanent, more enduring, and more impregnable than ever.

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